

What have you done today to avoid an accident or injury?

By: Mark Blankenship, Garrison Safety Office, 270-956-0876

The transition into Spring and Summer allows us to shake off the dreariness of winter and enjoy the outdoors. This is the time of year when everyone must make a conscious effort to ensure safety is on the forefront of our daily activities.

While no one wishes to be involved in an injury causing accident, sometimes even the best laid plans cannot avoid them from happening. However, there are measures we can take to ensure that these incidents are few and far between.

Riding bicycles is a good form of exercise and an activity that Families or Soldier's can do together. Since most bicycles have been dormant during the winter season, it is imperative that they are checked prior to riding. Do not forget to check the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and review the requirements in Campbell Regulation (CAM Reg) 190-5 as it pertains to operation of bicycles on the installation. The Garrison Safety Office has maintenance tips for bicycles and can provide the information referenced in the CAM Reg.

Swimming is another summer activity that a lot of Soldier's and Families enjoy. Make sure that you are swimming in an approved area with a lifeguard. Wearing an approved Coast Guard flotation device is recommended for weak or non-swimmers even if a lifeguard is present. Fort Campbell has several "Off-Limits" areas when it comes to swimming; ensure you are aware of these areas before planning an excursion or a spur of the moment water activity.

Heat injuries come in a variety of ways, the main cause of heat injuries is from dehydration caused by excessive activities and not replenishing fluids. Sunburn(s) may occur from not properly applying sunscreen to yourself or any children that may be enjoying the outdoors. It is recommended that a water soluble sunscreen is used while swimming or working outdoors. Wearing of sunglasses that provide protection from UV rays is also important to protect the eyes and the skin areas in close proximity.

Parents should closely monitor children on playground equipment during the summer months. Many playground items become excessively hot while being constantly exposed to direct sunlight. This may lead to burns and discomfort while playing on the equipment, especially slides.

Water Parks are another area of concern. Last year, a small child received third degree burns on his feet when he walked from the water area to the rest area due to the excessive heat on the concrete. It is recommended that all personnel who use water parks wear some type of water shoe to protect their feet from burns and possibly cuts from rough concrete.

Boating and alcohol do not mix. The majority of Army accidents while boating have been directly linked to alcohol consumption. A close second is the non-use of personal flotation devices. Ensure that there are enough flotation devices, of the proper size for all occupants of the boat and they are worn or are readily assessable prior to launch.

The transition from winter to spring/summer along with the joyous return of our Soldiers leads to wanting to get out and enjoy our favorite activities. Have fun, enjoy yourselves, but remember a little prior planning can help answer this question, "What have you done today to avoid an accident or injury"?